

THE WALNUT

4. The Buddhist dictionary *Fan yi min yi tsi* 翻譯名義集, compiled by Fa Yün 法雲,¹ contains a Chinese-Sanskrit name for the walnut (*hu t'ao* 胡桃, *Juglans regia*) in the transcription *po-lo-ši* 播囉師, which, as far as I know, has not yet been identified with its Sanskrit equivalent.² According to the laws established for the Buddhist transcriptions, this formation is to be restored to Sanskrit *pārasī*, which I regard as the feminine form of the adjective *pārasa*, meaning "Persian" (derived from *Parsa*, "Persia"). The walnut, accordingly, as expressed by this term, was regarded in India as a tree or fruit suspected of Persian provenience. The designation *pārasī* for the walnut is not recorded in Boehtlingk's Sanskrit Dictionary, which, by the way, contains many other lacunes. The common Sanskrit word for "walnut" is *ākhōṭa*, *akṣōṭa*, *akṣōṣa*,³ which for a long time has been regarded as a loan-word received from Iranian.⁴

Pliny has invoked the Greek names bestowed on this fruit as testimony for the fact that it was originally introduced from Persia, the

¹ Ch. 24, p. 27 (edition of Nanking).—BUNYIU NANJIO (Catalogue of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka, No. 1640) sets the date of the work at 1151. WYLIE (Notes on Chinese Literature, p. 210) and BRETSCHNEIDER (Bot. Sin., pt. I, p. 94) say that it was completed in 1143. According to S. JULIEN (Méthode, p. 13), it was compiled from 1143 to 1157.

² BRETSCHNEIDER (Study and Value of Chinese Botanical Works, *Chinese Recorder*, Vol. III, 1871, p. 222) has given the name after the *Pen ts'ao kan mu*, but has left it without explanation.

³ The last-named form occurs twice in the Bower Manuscript (HOERNLE's edition, pp. 32, 90, 121). In Hindustānī we have *axrōt* or *ākrōt*.

⁴ F. SPIEGEL, *Arische Periode*, p. 40. The fact that the ancient Iranian name for the walnut is still unknown does not allow us to explain the Sanskrit word satisfactorily. Its relation to Hebrew *egōz*, and Persian *kōz*, *gōz* (see below), is perspicuous. Among the Hindu-Kush languages, we meet in Yidgha the word *oghūzoh* (J. BIDDULPH, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, Appendices, p. CLXVII), which appears as a missing link between Sanskrit on the one hand and the Semitic-Armenian forms on the other hand: hence we may conjecture that the ancient Iranian word was something like **agōza*, *angōza*; and this supposition is fully confirmed by the Chinese transcription *a-yüe* (above, p. 248). Large walnuts of India are mentioned by the traveller Č'añ Te toward the middle of the thirteenth century (BRETSCHNEIDER, *Mediaeval Researches*, Vol. I, p. 146). The walnuts of the province of Kusistan in Persia, which are much esteemed, are sent in great quantities to India (W. AINSLIE, *Materia Indica*, Vol. I, p. 464).